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ABSTRACT

The articles in this publication discuss the identity problem of those educated in organizational communication when they face a job market that does not identify specific roles and positions for their specialty. The publication includes an outline for a course in organizational communication and a list of guidelines for the selection of client organizational and instructional strategy; a description of a multidisciplinary program for preparing professionals in organizational communication; a seminar outline on assessing the organizational communication job market that includes goals, objectives, student paper topics, and an evaluative tool; a model for the analysis of the consultant-client relationship; a discussion of levels of personal interactions between subgroups within an organization; and a report of a needs assessment study conducted to determine the communication needs and activities of a variety of organizations. (MAI)

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The Metropolitan Washington Communication Association Encoder

Volume 5 Spring 1978 Number 3

Theme Issue: Organizational Communication

Malthon M. Anapol, Editor

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CS502 188

From The Editor...

This issue of the Encoder focuses on organizational communication. Our purpose is to inspect the persistent identity problem faced by those who traverse "organizational communication curricula" when they encounter a market which generally does not identify specific roles and positions for their specialty.

The papers are diverse, but share a common underlying thread which leaves one with considerable enthusiasm for the future.

Raymond Falcione (University of Marylanf) creates a claer perspective of the circular assumptions and types of research which have dominated the specialty area. His view of appropriate exit abilities for majors in organizational communication and his discussion of learning experiences which bridge theory and practice are very useful reading for scholar, student and practitioner.

Dan Miller and Duane Wood (Central Michigan Unversity) describe a multi-disciplinary educational approach which has resulted in the integration of a concentration in orgabizational communication within an M.S. in Administration program. The student emerges with special skills which are very recognizable in the marketplace and which permit then to seek managerial careers in several areas of organizations.

Bill Ternent (Howard University) describes a graduate seminar focusing on in-depth research by participants of the kinds of organizations in which they intens to work. The experience includes analysis of potential role as professionals in organizational communication and the acceptability of those roles in such organizations. The seminar also focuses on creating a futuristic projection of organizations and the roles of communication in their future development.

Stewart Tubbs and John Baird (General Motors Institute) bridge the gap between the consultant's theoretical and problem solving skills and organization needs. They propose a model for diagnosing organizational needs and specific consultant behaviors for specific organizational needs. they also call fot the development of intraments capable of accurately assessing/dingnosing specific need levels of organizations.

Bob Hiett (Human Sciences Research, Inc., McLean Va.) reports aspects of a study for the U.S. Army in which the extent of interpersonal interaction among blacks and whites on and off the job is related to their respective perceptions of equal treatment within the organization. He suggests the potential of shared communication experiences such as TV's Roots for increasing interracial interpersonal interactions. His work points to an interesting array of opportunities for organizational communication professionals.

Diana Kaplin and Dennis Smith (Temple University) report a study fo perceived needs of organizations which could be filled by the professional in organizational communication. They note the lack of structured existing roles in organizations for such individuals and the nedd for creating them. Their findings are an interesting affirmation of previous studies mentioned and positions on curricla taken by Falcione.

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Theme Issue on Organization Communication

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News and Notes

Virginia Speech Communication Convention October 13-14, 1978
Richmond Sheraton Hotel, Richmond Virginia
Keynote Speaker: Friday, October 13, 1978 at 1:00 p.m.
For Infromation Write: President, Dr. Don McConkey:
Madison University, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801

Virginia Humanities Conference October 20-21, 1978
Dulles Marriott Inn, Theme: Television and Its Impact Upon The Arts/Humanities
For Information, Contact: Dr. Blanton Croft, No. Virginia Community. Telephone: 323-3000, ext. 235,256,259

Speech Communication Association National Convention November 2-5 1978
Radisson Hotel, Minneapolis, Minn.
For Information, Contact: Dr. William Work, S.C.A. National Office,
Falls Church, Virginia. 22041. Telephone: 379-1888

From Dr. Bruce Mason, Director of the MWCA Individual Events Tournament
at George Mason University in February we have the winners.

PERSUASION

1. MIKE PERSONETTE (GEORGE MASON UNIV.)
2. MARGARET STRICKLAND (GEORGE MASON UNIV.) TIE WITH...
2. BILLY KENNEY (NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMM. COL.)
4. DWIGHT CREER (U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY)
5. KATHLEEN FEENEY (NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMM. COL.)
6. NABIL ABUZNAID (NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMM. COL.)

INFORMATIVE

1. MAGGIE MILLER (GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY)
2. SANDY SCENNEL (PRINCE GEORGES COMM. COL.)
3. BILLY KENNEY (NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMM. COL.)
4. PHIL JAMES (GEORGE MASON UNIV.)
5. FRAN MINDEL (TOWSON STATE COL.)
6. BERNIE RESTREPO (NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMM. COL.)

RHETORICAL CRITICISM

1. MIKE ROWAN (GEORGE MASON UNIV.)
2. MARGE LURZ (GEORGE MASON UNIV.)
3. MARGARET STRICKLAND (GEORGE MASON UNIV.)
4. BOB SCHMIDT (PRINCE GEORGES COMM. COL.)
5. MIKE PERSONETTE (GEORGE MASON UNIV.)
6. DIANE HEMMELT (PRINCE GEORGES COMM. COL.)

PROSE

1. BRAD WILLMORE (GEORGE MASON UNIV.)
2. BILLY KENNEY (NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMM. COL.)
3. DIANE THOMPSON (UNIV. OF MARYLAND)
4. SANDY SCENNEL (PRINCE GEORGES COMM. COL.)
5. STEVE SOMMERS (PRINCE GEORGES COMM. COL.)
6. DEBBY BELL (UNIV. OF MARYLAND)

EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING

1. BRAD WILLMORE (GEORGE MASON UNIV.)
2. CLARIE HORVATH (GEORGE MASON UNIV.)
3. MIKE PERSONETTE (GEORGE MASON UNIV.)
4. FRANK ZUCCO (U. S. NAVAL ACADEMY)
5. PHIL JAMES (GEORGE MASON UNIV.)
6. DEBBIE WINTERS (GEORGE MASON UNIV.)

DRAMATIC DUO

1. MAGGIE MILLER & MIKE ROWAN (GEORGE MASON UNIV.)
2. DAVID SCHROEDER & ROBYN PETERSON (PRINCE GEORGES COMM. COL.)
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Important Announcement: Dr. Blanton Croft of the Northern Virginia Community College-Woodbridge is the new membership chairman and all inquiries about new or renewed membership should be directed to him. His office phone is 323-0300 and his home phone is 345-8390. MWCA membership is a tremendous bargain since it includes a subscription to the Encoder, a list of exciting events, and lots of other good things, Push your friends and colleagues to call Blanton Croft and join.

While dates and speakers have to be arranged our plans for next year include a lecture by a major communication figure in September, a weekend theatre-cocktail party in October, a Research Conference in January or February, and the traditional pot-luck dinner in May. If you have news or notes for future issues please send them to the editor. If you have a secret ambition to write a gossip column and become "the Ear" of MWCA, please phone the editor at 636-6014.

INSTRUCTION IN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Raymond L. Falcione
University of Maryland

For more than two decades interest in the area of organizational communication has been growing. Departments of communication, business, management, journalism, sociology, psychology, and secondary education, to name a few are increasing their interest in what is more commonly becing called organizational communication. Surveys by Downs and Larimer (1974), and Pace and Feingold (1975) support statements of this quite phenomenal growth.

Part of the reason for this growth is student demand for educational experience which will have direct bearing on future employment. Since we are all members of organizations in one way or another, the development of effective communication skills within organizational contexts is extremely important. This emphasis on skill development can be helpful to the career-oriented student.

Philosophically, the emphasis on skill development and a career-orientation can be troublesome for those who are concerned about sacrificing theory to teach skills. This is certainly a legitimate concern. However, it is my opinion that courses in organizational communication can be taught effectively by incorporating both theory and skill development. In fact, Spicer (1975) reports that instructors in organizational communication tend to perceive theory and skills as being equally important. Using a modified DELPHI technique to determine which communication competencies were most important for student to acquire, Spicer found of the 44 competencies listed, 18 could be viewed as primarily skills-oriented, 19 could be viewed as primarily theory-oriented, and the final seven could be viewed as both theory and skills-oriented.

Eadie (1977) specifies three major end-results for the student majoring in organizational communication:

1. The ability to display a broad-based conceptual understanding of communication as event and process.

2. The ability to demonostrate proficiency in interpersonal skills.
3. The ability to intergrate this specialized knowledge about communication theory and skills with a general body of knowledge and should be able to apply this integrated knowledge in organizational settings.

While the above three end-results suggested by Eadie are useful, they could apply to anyone majoring in communication generally. They don't sufficiently identify the specific areas of proficiency necessary for a student major in organizational communication.

The purpose of this paper then, is to develop a more comprehensive list of end-results for a student majoring in organizational communication, recommend a classfication system which purports to establish parameters for the field of organizational communication, and suggest some specific instructional strategies which are capable of integrating both theory and skill development.

END-RESULTS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION MAJORS

Below are the abilities which I feel a student majoring in organizational communications should possess:

1. Ability to display a conceptual understanding of intrapersonal, interpersonal and group communication processes.
environmental interface processes.
3. Ability to display a conceptual understanding of behavior unique to the organizational context, with particular emphasis on end-result or outcome variables such as jobs satisfaction, motivation, productivity, effectiveness, climate, change, and innovativeness.
4. Ability to display a conceptual understanding of instructional paradigms and techniques desinged to develop communication skills in organizational members.
5. Ability to display a conceptual understanding of software/hardware media technologies in organizations such as written audiovisual and electronic media.
6. Ability to display a conceptual understanding of systems theory as a means for viewing and disgnosing the nature of organizations.
7. Ability to display a conceptual understanding of research methodology, including research design, instrumentation, data analysis, and field research strategies.
8. Ability to integrate the above conceputal processes with specific behavioral skills as they relate to organizational settings and within organizational environments.

The above list demonstrates for me hthose conceptual areas which should be required of an individual majoring in organizational communication. It requires an eclectic perspecive which reaches far beyond the traditional speech communication emphases. If these end-results are to be obtained, the student may take coursework in fields such as journalism, organizational behavior, industrial and organizational psychology, social psychology, instructional technology, statistics and computer science.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION CLASSIFICATION

In his study of communication as a scholarly discipline, Mortensen (1972) notes that "since the subject lacks either fixed boundaries or universally recognized dimensions of inquiry, the search for fundamentals required some arbitrary decisions about what to underscore and what to omit." What is suggested of the general field of communication is equally applicable to the narrower area of organizational communication. The purpose of this section is to recommend an organizational communication classification system (See Greenbam and Falcione, 1976) which can be viewed as major areas of concern in the teaching of organizational communication. These classifications will hopefully provide paramenters for what should be covered in an organizational communication program.

1. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION IN ORGANIZATIONS.

This classification deals with the analysis of factors relative to the interpersonal situation in the organization, origniating in the dyadic relationship, the workgroup, or in conferences.

The concepts analyzed may include credibility, interpersonal trust, status, nonverbal variables, cognitve similarity, roles, redundancy, feedback, listening and semantics.

The topics in this classification may include superior-subordinate relationships, transactional analysis, counseling, conflict, perception, human relations, managerial style, and personal characteristics of managers and subordinates.

2. INTRAGROUP COMMUNICATION IN ORGANIZATIONS

The literature in this classification may include the above-indicated dimensions of interpersonal communication but are distinguished by the fact that the interacting parties are members of the same group.

The group analyzed may include specific functional dempartments, line, staff, labor, management, consumers, government bodies, project groups, and small work groups.

The topics in the classification may include participation, conflict, maintenance roles, group size, individual behavior in groups and group productivity.

3. INTERGROUP COMMUNICATION IN ORGANIZATIONS

The literature in this classification may include the above-indicated dimensions of interpersonal and intragroup communication but the distinguishing element is that the interacting parties are representative of different groups.

The groups considered may be different departments in the same organization, line-staff relationships, labor-management relationships, organizational interface with customers, and governmental interface with taxpayers and or other agencies.

The topics in this classification may include coordination, collaboration, intergroup conflict, interorganizational conflict, negotiation, effects of hierarchical organization, influence of interest groups, and external communication such as external communication such as public relations and advertising.

4. COMMUNICATION FACTORS AND ORGANIZATION GOALS.

This classification may include anlayzing the influence of causal communication factors on the intervening and end-result organization variables.

Some of the causal communication factors may include communication attitudes, communication satifisfaction and expectations, and communication planning.

Some of the intervening and end-result variables may include organizational performance, morale, conformity to plans, adaptability, organizational change, productivity and organizational effectiveness.

The topics in this classification may include organizational climate, job satification, decison-making, problem-solving, organizational change, participation, leadership, motivation, innovation, adaptability, productivitiy, and effectiveness.

5. SKILL IMPROVEMENT AND TRAINING IN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

This classification is concerned with communication skill improvement, verbal, written, and nonverbal, including public communication, meetings, group process, writing skills, listening, and interpersonal skills applicable to persuasive contexts, interviewing, and counseling.

Areas dealt with may be oriented toward individaul communication skill development as well as an emphasis on the techniques of training within organizational contexts.

Topics in this classification may include the design of training needs, materials, techniques, learning principes, training laboratories, games, role playing, programmed instruction, discussion techniques, and the use of film and videotape.

6. COMMUNICATION MEDIA IN ORGANIZATIONS: SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE

This classification may relate to both software and hardware including oral media, written media, telephonic media, audiovisual media, and electronic media.

Some of the topics in this classification may include document retrieval systems, information systems, and computer capabilities.

7. COMMUNICATION SYSTEM ANALYSIS IN ORGANIZATIONS.

This classification is concerned with the overall organization or subunits thereof; communication evaluation, communication audits, communication networks, communication diffusion and organization development.

Some of the topics in the classification may include communication network structures, information requirement analysis, data base models, change-agent topics, general systems theory, cybernetics, and organizational climate.

8. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY IN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

This classification emphasizes research instruments and scales employed in the daignosis of organizational communication. Emphasis

is placed on specific field research strategies, inlcuding problems, techniques, and data analysis.

Obviously, the eight classifications are not being suggested as areas to be covered in a single ccurse. They do, hiowever, represent for me at least , the rought parameters of organizational communicastion. A graduate of an organizational communication program should possess a theoretical and behavioral understanding of the above classifications.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES WHICH INTEGRATE THEORY AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

There are many possible strategies for the integration of theory and skills, but for the purpose of this paper, I would like to discuss two designs which, in my opinion, are essential to a viable organizational communication program.

1. Field Research in Organizational Communication Classes.

One of the best ways to augment and integrate the theories presented in organizational communication is to test some of those theoretical assertions in an on-going organizational environment, by conducting correlational analyses which measure various end-result or outcome variables as a function of communication variables.

Another way is to conduct field research which is primarily descriptive of perception, attitudes and behavior. A communication audit is an excellent procedure to be used in this type of analysis.

A course incorporating field research activities allows for an integration of theory and skill in a very meaningul way. Assuming that the research eminates from the theory, this type of course provides both students and instructor opportunites to develop relevant skills in analyzing theoretical premises. Depending on the specific nature of the research activity, a course of this type allows for development in most, if not allof the above classifications. This kind of activity could prove invaluabel to students by exposing them to literature review, resarech design and implementation, data analysis, and data presentation, which go beyond the classroom environment.

GUIDELINES IN SELECTION OF THE CLIENT ORGANIZATIONAL AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY

There are several critical factors which an instructor myst deal with prior to and during a course designed as a practicum in field research:

1. Establish contact with a client organization long before the course begins. If contact is made during the semester, prior to the course offering, you will have enough time to negotiate mutual expectations with the organization's representative and structure the time schedule prior to the beginning of the course. This schedule should be part of the syllabus so the students will know from the first day of class how extensive the time and energy requirements will be.

2. Make every effort to contact the individual who is in a position to make a position to make a decison concerning entry in the organization. It is a waste of time and energy to negotiate with an organizational representaive who does not have the power to grant permission to do the research.

3. During the period of negotiation, be sure you can meet some need of the organization. Some time ago, I was negotiating a research project with the Director of Personnel of a large manufacturing firm. He asked me what my research could do for him and his company. My response was that I could provide him with information concerning employee satisfaction and how it may relate to certain communication variables. He responded by telling me that he would rather not know how satisfied his employees were. He said, "If you ask them how satisfied they are, they may begin to realize just how dissatisfied they really are. I'd rather not open a can of worms." With that remark, I realized that mutual expectations would not develop very quickly, and that I probably couldn't meet the needs which he had. As it turned out, the Personnel Director was concerned about how productivity might be a function of communication and we negotiated an agreement so that those concerns could be met.

4. Realize the limitations you are working under and don't try to promise too much. For whatever reason, there may be the tendency to promise results which are beyond the capabilities or scope of the project. This should be viewed as a learning experience which is to be carried out in an organizational environment. For most of the students it will be their first exposure to this type of activity. It is being suggested that their inexperience should be seriously considered when mutual expectations are determined.

5. A liaison team comprised of organizational representatives should be formed. Once mutual concerns have been dealt with and the project has been conceived, it is important to work directly with a liaison group. Their internal contacts with other organizational personnel can be a tremendous help in setting up schedules, meetings, feedback sessions, establishing time parameters and disseminating information.

6. Once the project parameters have been established and the liaison team formed, the nature of the research project must be clear to all parties involved. There should always be a letter from the person in charge, disseminated throughout the organization informing them of the research project and stressing its importance for the entire organization or unit involved.

7. A guarantee should always be made concerning anonymity, and should be adhered to at all times by everyone involved.

8. Clarification of responsibility for costs. It has been my experience that the client organization is normally willing to assume certain costs such as postage, stationery, reproduction, computer time, and travel expenses. This is not always the case however. Be sure financial requirements are mutually understood from the beginning.

9. Students should have as much opportunity as possible for participating in the decision-making processes throughout the semester. Instructors must do much of the initial work and establish some guidelines, but his instructional design should allow the students to carry most of the responsibility while the instructor acts more as a resource.

Advantages of Field Research Activities in Organizational Communication Classes.

The advantages of doing field research in organizational communication classes can be significant:

1. It allows students to integrate theory with practical application.
2. It allows students to participate in and experience their own "mini-organization" consisting of the class which has goals, norms, status variables, conflict, leadership, coordination of activities and delegation of authority and responsibility.
3. It allows students to observe first-hand, the internal organization communication.
4. It allows students to diagnose the viability of the internal organizational communication system, and apply theoretical criteria to real recommendations designed for the system's modification.
5. It allows students to actively participate in various types of data collection methodologies. The two methods which have worked well in the past is the combination of interview and questionnaire. The interview in particular, provides the students with an excellent opportunity to gain insight in the dimenstion of organizational behavior.
6. It allows students to interpret qualitative and quantitative data to be used as a basis for specific organizational change recommendations.

The above advantages exemplify my biases for conducting field research in organizational communication classes. It can be exciting an learning experience for all involved.

2. A Course which Integrates Theory and Still Development.

The purpose of this section is to describe a seminar in organizational communication recently taught at the University of Maryland and at the State University of New York at Buffalo. This course was taught during the Spring semester of 1977. Prior to the beginning of the Spring semester, Dr. Gerald Goldhaber, associate professor at SUNY-Buffalo, and I collaborated on a course design which, in my estimation, was both exciting and mutually rewarding. The course was a pilot endeavor, and has since been incoporated at the Univeristy of Maryland as Spch 624 and titled "Research and Intervention Procedures in Organizational Communication."

The course explored the role of the internal and external communication consultant as an organizational change-agent who relies on data gathered with social science tools and techniques to facilitate the communication development of an organization.

The specific course objectives were to:

1. describe organization development (OD) as a framework within which communication consulting may occur;
2. define, diagram and exemplify five differnet types of intervention used by consultants;
3. define, describe and illustrate survey-guided development of organizations within the "catalytic" intervention model;
4. describe and illustrate the factors affecting the establishment of the client relationship;

5. define and illustrate the diagnostic and prescriptive functions of communication consulting;
6. list, describe, define and illustate the types of communication consulting intervention activities;
7. describe and illustrate intervention activities useful in managing organization and interpersonal conflict;
8. list and illustrate problems encountered by the communication consultant during interventin activities;
9. list and illustrate ethical considerations of the communication consultant during intervention activities;
client relationship.

In order to meet the above objectives, the following books were assigned:

1. Organization Development and Change by Edgar F. House;
2. Organization Development by W. L. French and C. H. Bell;
3. The Addison-Wesley Series in Organizatonal Development;
4. Survey-Guided Development: A manual for Consultants by D. Hauser, P. Pecorella, and A. Wissler;
5. Trainers' Guide to Androgogy by J. Ingalls.

Course Sequence and Activities.

The purpose of this section is to provide a description of specific activities conducted throughout the course.

During the first ten weeks of the seminar, the six students enrolled in my class at Maryland and the six students enrolled in Professor Goldhaber's class at Buffalo, became well-grounded in theories, models, and methodologies of organization development.
discussion of consultation theory as well as the use of case studies for analyasis. Only the students in the Univeristy of Maryland class participated in a three hour per week internship with various government and private organization. These internships were part of the course requirement and were conducted in the organizational development, personnel, or staff development departments of various organizations. Each week, the students would keep a brief log of their activities, and a portion of each class was devoted to exchanging feedback on their experiences.

While the students were becoming familiar with consultation theory, Professor Goldhaber and I contacted four large New York based corporations with organization development departments, and a private New York based communication consultant. We arranged for both classes to meet with their key OD personnel and the communication consultant during the week of March 28, 1977. The corporation consisted of two large chemical companies, a large insurance company, and a large consulting firm with a wide range of consulting activities.

In preparation for our meeting with the four corporations and the private consultant, both groups of students were to develop a series of questions to be answered by the corporate representatives and the private consultant. The question fell under the following main

categories: 1) structure, 2) personnel, 3) selection process, contact and solicitations, 4) contracts, 5) nature of intervention and data-gathering, 6) evalutation, and 7) ethics.

Both student groups exchanged the question they developed, synthesized them and finalized the list. During the seventh week of class, the question were sent to the coporate representatives and the private consultant, who each in turn, sent both classes, real or hypothetical cases pertinent to their organization or situation. The students from both classes were to analyze the cases and make specific recommendations to the corporate representatives and private consultant during the meetings in New York. In other words, the students were being asked to apply their knowledge of consultation theory in the from of specific feedback to the individuals involved. The feedback was first presented in written form approximately one week prior to the trip to New York. During the week of March 28th, four hour meeting were scheduled with each organization and the private consulant. The meetings allowed the students to provide feedback and recommendations on the cases. Essentially, the students participated as consultants to the organizations and to the private consultant.

Also, during the meetings, the organizational representatives and the private consultant exchanged ideas and perceptions concerning the list of question. Each of the seven main topics were thoroughly discussed.

During the last four weeks of class, the students continued their reading assignments and case analyses, We also spent a considerable amount of time processing our experiences. After the trip to New York, the students were in a much better position to understand consultation theory from an experiental perspective.

They were also in a better position to understand and empathize with some real problems encountered by internal and external consultants. One particular benefit derived from this experience was that the students were able to see some of the disparaties between theory and practive withour negating the viability of theory as a basis for skill development. Once they became grounded in theory, the experiences they had, exemplified and internalized the theory in a more realistic way.

skill development dilemma encountered by many instructors of organizational communication. Hopefully, with the presentation of the end-results, the classification system, and the intergrative instructional strategies, the organization communication instructor will be more prepared to deal with this dilemma.

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A MULTIDISCIPLINARY PROGRAM FOR PREPARING PROFESSIONALS IN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

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In a casual dinner conversation with a public relations director of a large,metropolitan bank, the question was asked, "what do you look for in potential managerial employees — for instance, people in public relations?" The answer was direct. "People who can communicate. People who understand business." An elaboration followed which essentially stuck to the same two points -- people must be able to read, write, speak and listen. And they must understand the philosophies and practices of a complex business housed in a regulated, but capitalistic society. If universities could produce persons with knowledge and skills in those two areas, plus a willingess to work, the employing organization could teach them their own techniques and apporaches utilized in public relations, organizational development, personnel, sales and general management. The report of the thrust of that conversation generated thought and curricula revision within our Department of Speech and Dramatic Arts.

Within the School of Business Administration, curricula revision was also taking place. Advances in the behavioral and social sciences, systems theory and methodology, as well as innovations in operations research and decision theory, lead to a questioning of many of the "universal" precepts of managements. A contingency approach had developed within the managementdiscipline which concluded that while some managerial problems and the skills needed to solve those problems were similar across several types of organizations others required specialized managerial expertise and concepts appropriate to a particular type of organization.[1]

Therefore, it was believed that an effective management curricula had to produce individuals capable of performing well within a variety of organizational systems — business, health, government, education.[2]

As a result, a multidisciplinary Master of Science in Administration Degree was designed. The M.S.A. program contained a generic core of

interdisciplinary administrative courses, a concentration of courses in a specialized administrative field,and a capstone, integrative internship.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The organizational communication area of concentration on the degree program was developed from the following two assumptions: (a) as organizations become more complex, specialized and interdependent, the need for persons knowledgeable in the process by which these organizations maintain stability and promote change — communication — becomes increasingly important, and (b) knowledge of communication is not sufficient to perform well within a complex organization, knowledge of the organization itself — goals, surrounding legal and social milieau, decision-making procedures — is also necessary. These assumptions manifest themselves in three overall objectives:

1. to understand managerial concepts and tools applicable to theadministration of a wide range of organizations;
2. to understand concepts and tools of the communication specialist useful within organizational settings; and
3. to apply the managerial and communication concepts to problemsencountered within a functioning, complex organiization.

In turn, these objectives generated the content of the curriculum designed to prepare communication specialists for a range of managerial positions within various types of organizations.

CURRICULUM DESIGN

In view of the objectives stated in the previous section, and taking into consideration trends in the fields of management and organizational communications, the curriculum has been divided into three parts — A common core of courses in administration, as area of concentration in seminar in communications.

The M.S.A. curriculum is designed to accomodate students, therefore, regardless of their undergraduate degree or area of specialization, the number of specific undergraduate prerequisties as been kept to a minimum. However, to ensure a student has the conceptual beackground required to master the graduate coursework, prerequisities in financial accounting, economics, interpersonal communications, and statistics are required.

ADMINISTRATIVE CORE

The administrative core, which is required of all students in the M.S.A. Program, constitutes 15-18 hours of the 36-39 hours needed for the degree. It is designed to provide students with the generic concepts, techniques, and and skills needed by the generalist in administration. This phase is intended to improve the student's ability in problem-solving and decision-making, his ability to relate the internal

operation to the external environments of the organizations, and his ability to understand and cope with human behavior in organizations. The courses in the core are interdisciplinary in nature. Some of these courses utilize team-teaching with professors from two or three different disciplines participating in the instruction. The other courses are eclectic, drawing from a variety of basic disciplines as they focus on certain administration issues and problems.

There are six courses in the administrative core: Environments of Administration, Human Resources and Managerial Effectiveness, Financial Planning and Analysis, Quantitative Applications in Management Decision Making, Administration of Dynamic Organizations, and Social Marketing. These courses were specifically designed for the MSA Program. Each is a part of the total package, and no course is prerequisite to the others.

Environments of Administration is a study of the impact of the economic, legal, political, and social environment of organizations. It presents pertinent concepts from these areas, analyses their interrelationships, and studies their ramification for administrators.

Humans Resources and Managerial Effectiveness aims to develop an understanding of human problems and processes which help or hinder successful task completion. Its purpose is to improve interpersonal skills as well as theorectical knowledge and to develop the ability to analysis the behavioral factors in management.

Financial Planning and Analysis deals with financial management in both the public and private sectors. Topics include the analysis of financial information, the sources and uses of funds, cost of capital, capital budgeting, cost-benefits analysis, national income and budget determination, and taxation and fiscal policies.

Quantitative Applications in Management Decision Making demonstrates the utilization of management science in the decision-making process of planning, conyrolling, and allocating resources. The statistical methods and operationsresearch techniques such as bayesian statistics, regression analysis, linear programming, queuing theory, inventory models, network analysis, and game theory are covered.

Administration of Dynamic Organizations uses a systems approach to study the common elements of the administrative process and their adaptation to unique features in diverse types of organizations. A course in organization theory, it emphasizes designing the organizational structures and decision-making processes, strategic and action planning, goal-setting and policy formation, performance appraisal and conflict resolution.

Social Marketing is the application of business marketing methods and expertise in managing social systems. However, major focus is upon non-business institutions and in non-profit markets.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CONCENTRATION

The specialty courses in communication, normally 15-18 hours, are taken within the Department of Speech and Dramatic Arts, including the following: Historical Foundations of Speech Communication,

Communication Theory, Small Group Communication, Diffusion of Innovation, Advanced Persuasion Theory, and Research Design.

In Historical Foundations the student learns of the development of the study of human communication beginning with the Greek thetoricains and advancing to the 20th Century. The emphasis is upon the "humanity" portion of the field of speech communication, including an examination of public speaking and the creation of public messages.

Communication Theory presents the empirical side of the field. Focusing upon the research of the 20th Century, it emphasizes developments since World War II. The several variables of the communication process are described and analyzed within several social settings, including organizations.

Small Group Communication specifically examines the body of research and theory attempting to explain and predict human behavior within groups. Managers work through and with groups in organizations and knowledge of how groups function and fail provides useful insight into the functioning and failure of organizations.

Advanced Persuasion uses empirical research and contemporary theories to examine the impact of messages upon individuals. The design and execution of an attitude change study forms part of the pedogogy of the course.

Diffusion of Innovations focuses upon the adaptor paradigm to analyze the impact of messages upon organizations, sub-cultures and societies. The course emphasizes the change process within organizational settings, but exposes the student to cross-cultural research.

Research Design provides the student with tools to ask and answer questions about the communication process and its impact upon human behavior. Although the course teaches research tools and techniques, it encourages the development of an attitude of questioning and testing. These attitudes are needed by communication specialists who may be creating message campaigns within and between organizations if they are to have the skills to measure impact and effectiveness.

The organizational communications concentration provides some flexibility depending upon a student's background and career goals. For example, the Department of Journalism offers a sequence of three graduate courses in public relations - theory, techniques and media practices - which may be taken by a student seeking a career in public relations. As a supplement to this sequence, students are encouraged to participate in the Public Relations Club which undertakes local and campus projects in public relations. Working with others to create an actual public relations campaign for a campus organization gives the student practical experience which can help prepare them for their internship experience and career positions. The Journalism courses may be taken in lieu of communication courses if the student has a good background in communications or they may be taken in addition to the communication core without this proficiency.

Several students on the M.S.A. curriculum also have taken Nonverbal Communication as a supplement or substitute on their programs as

well. Their objective is to become more aware of the total person as a communicator and to explore the impact of environment, including space, upon relationships, messages strategies and task-oriented behaviors.

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

The concluding part of the curriculum is a supervised on-the-job managerial work experience in some phase of organizational communications. This phase of the curriculum attempts to help the student make the transition from the acquisition of the scientific comcepts of administration to their application in dynamic organizations. Practitioners and scholars alike have both been concerned about the transferability of learning from the classroom to the job. There is a distinct difference between knowing about organizational communications and administration and having the skill and experience to successfully implement that knowledge. However, the purpose of the internship is not to gain administrative experience per se, but to apply the concepts and skills obtained in the curriculun to the problems encountered, the projects assigned, and the tasks undertaken in a position of managerial responsibility. An academic treatise, which describes, analyzes, and evaluates the concepts applied on the job is submitted to the academic advisor in organization communications. This paper is not simply a log of aily activites, but anlyzes the learning gained from the internship. This paper also fulfills the written requirements for graduation mandated by the School of Graduate Studies. The employing sponsor also evaluates the intern. These inputs are used as a summative evaulation of both the student and the program.

A concurrent seminar is required of all students in the program who are doing an internship in their field. In the seminar the students share the ideas, experiences, and problems they are encountering as they work on the tasks they've been assigned. Similarities and differences in approaching their problems and overcoming obstacles are analyzed in relation to what the students have learned about administration.

PROGRAM TO DATE

Since the inception of the M.S.A. Program, 310 students have been admitted. Organizational Communication is but one of the several film administration, business administration, educational administration, health administration, personnel and labor relations, public administration, parks and recreation administration and social work administration.

Areas of concentration in land use planning, office administration, and the administration of religious organizations are now in the final stages of development.

While the area of concentration in organizational communications has been among those ones with a small number of admissions (12), it is one of the more specialized fields. Of the 28 students who have graduated thus far (another 12 will have completed their degree

requirements by May, 1978), two have been in organizational communication. Of these two, one has a position with General Motors in public relations with additional responsibilities in improving managers' public speaking abilities. The other was admitted to the doctoral program in communications at Kent State University and now is enrolled in his second term.

A third student, who will graduate in May, is currently serving her internship at Total Leonard, Incorporated. A French owned corporation, Total Leonard is the largest oil refinery and distributor in Michigan. It is headed by a small top-management staff, including a president, two vice-presidents, and a personnel director. Her assignment is to analyze the interpersonal communication and information flows among these four and make recommendations for their improvement.

Three other students have completed communcations internships, One participated as a member of a collective bargaining team, contributing both in background research and in negotiations at the table. The second conducted research study on available types of off-campus housing for universities students, established a system to facilitate communications among university housing, private renters, real estate brokers and students. An additional assignment was to act as a liason for a real estate professor and a number of developers and mortgage bankers. The third student worked for a state senator in Michigan in his re-election campaign to improve communications among himself and his campaign staff. Another major responsibility was to improve the flow of comminciations with his office in the state capitol.

PROGRAM ADVANTAGES FOR COMMUNICATION PROFESSIONALS

The M.S. in administration Degree offers several advantages to the student seeking a career as a communication specialist within an organization. One, the multidisciplinary nature of the program exposes the student to various theories and practical approaches. Students study with persons in economic, political science, business, accounting, marketing and communication, each bringing their individual experiences and viewpoints, sometimes conflicting, but always enlightening, to the classroom. Two, the program is administered by a Director who is independent of any School or College in the University, reporting directly to the Provost. This structure helps free the program from the political striving, which is typically inherent as strictly disciplinary units seek increasing support among restricted resources. Three, the Director is advised by a committee comprised of one represenative from each of the areas of concentration on the degree program. This multidisciplinary group helps to insure that no one discipline will control the program and that the content of the of the administrative core remains relevant to the several organizations represented. Four, the intergration of the communications coursework with the courses in business and management, greatly enhances

student's post-graduation employment opportunities, especially with the culminating internship experience. Companies seeking "business" educated personnel are more intersted in interviewing communications students who have theadministration background, too. Further, while the organization sponsoring the internship makes no guarantee of eventual employment opportunities in other organizations. Five, the diversity the sudent population in the core courses, with participants from the several M.S.A. areas of concentration, encourages an awareness of problems and procedures in specialty fields other than communications. At the same time, communication students also enlighten other speciality students with experiences and theories which can improve the performance of the latter in their own fields. This interaction is symbiotic, but more beneficial to those aspiring to professional careers in communications. They need a better understanding of how goals, perspectives, and norms differ among all types of aorganizations.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the Master of Science in Administration with an emphasis in organizational communications provides a multidisiciplinary approach for preparing professionals in communications. This relatively unique curriculum encourages students to develop working knowledge of communications and organizations permitting graduates to sek manerial careers in several area of organizations but particularly in public relations, organizational development, sales, personnel and general administration.

[1]*Contingency Views of Organization and Management,* Kast and Rosenzweig, Science Research Associates, Inc., Chicago, Illinois, 1973.

[2]*Management: A Contingency Approach,* Hellriegel and Slocum, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Reading Massachusetts, 1974.

TEACHING ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION:

Preparing Graduate Students to Encounter an Ill-defined Job Market

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SPECIAL PROBLEMS FOR GRADUATE STUDIES AND STUDENTS

Organizational communication as an undergraduate specialty areain human communication has an identity problem. At the graduate level it has an identity crisis. At the basic skills level of the undergraduate program the regrouping of the traditional courses with some modifications under the rubric "organizational communication" can be justified as a logical progression in content and curriculum development. At the graduate level, justification is tenuous. Little that exists in the typical curriculum has not been borrowed from somewhere else: interpersonal communication, small group communication, communication theory, non-verbal communication, management theory, psychology, social psychology, sociology, organizational behavior, systems theory, information theory, decision theory, economics...the list is endless.

I have yet to metion to anyone—outside our own tight little group, of course—that I teach "organizational communication" without encountering a quizzical expression followed by the devastating question "What's that?" I find I can handle the question without too much paranoia. After all, I have a job in the "field." But imagine the impact of such a question on most graduate students! Even for those who "have their act together" that simple question can raise self doubt, anxiety and welling panic. After all, they don't have a job in the field and their very identity is questioned by those they expect to employ them.

There isn't a whopping big bunch of jobs "out there" that are called "organizational communicator." Most that do carry the handle are within academe. One might almost arrive at the conclusion that we are engaged in an incestuous self serving intellectual parlor game with our window shades pulled to the larger reality.

I don't believe so. But, the problem persists that our "specialty" is misunderstood at best, and unknown at worst, by those who might benefit by employing our students. Consequently, our proteges are not only faced with the problem of understanding what they can do and offer, but of understanding the organizations they would work in and the extent to which managers in those organizations perceive need for what they can do, and being prepared to market their essentially intangible products and services to that generally unaware market.

PROBLEMS AS EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Problems, however, are most healthfully viewed as opportunities. In this case, the opportunity is one of creating a learning situation for students which enables the investigation in depth of organizations of professional or career interest to them while integrating theory and empirical insights, sensitizing those organizations to the value of their professional capabilities, and preparing the student to market his or her expertise.

Obviously, such learning objectives are not served by a series of lectures, by programmed instruction, by a mastery program, interships or other individual educational strategies. Any or all approaches might be useful depending upon the individual student, upon his or her personal development, relationships with organizations, experience, and similar factors. Moreover, the overriding objective of such learning objectives is the acceptance of personal responsibility for one's professional future and the development of confidence in one's investgative, intellectual and decision making skills. Such an array of objectives demands that the student have access to resources including his or her personal consultant.

AN ADVANCED GRADUATE SEMINAR

At Howard University we offer a graduate seminar focusing on these objectives. Each participant is expected to have broad knowledge of organizational and communication theory, empirical research and experience. Typically, participants have completed an M.A. program in Organizational Communication or have a combination of studies in organizational behavior, business management, and communication.

The seminar prospectus describing the objectives, strategy, evaluation and grading, and instructional materials is illustrated in Exhibit 1.

Expanding upon the basic prospectus, a sequence of questions relating to the production of seven bi-weekly papers is available upon demand following participant discussion of how they might organize individually and collectively to fulfill the task. (See Exhibit 2.) These questions are intended to aid seminar participants in developing a comprehensive view of the type of organization they wish to investigate. The questions are open to modification by the group as a whole and by individuals as long as there is agreement on a basic schedule and essentially similar topics which enable group discussion and meaningful exchange of ideas at seminar meetings.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION SEMINAR 241-720

PURPOSE: The seminar is intended to introduce advanced graduate students to an array of contemporary issues and problems of organizations and institutions and to inspect the contribution of communication to such problems or issues and the potential contribution of communication in attempts to deal with those problems.

OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of the seminar each particpant shall have:

1) analyzed the major issues or problems confronted by organizations in a specific field,

2) defined the characteristics of a "healthy" organization in that field and identified methods for assessing organizational conditions,

3) projected the major changes which will be required of that type of organization in the future and reflected upon support for and constraints of such change,

4) conducted a preliminary field analysis of an organization,

5) analyzed the communications problems of such an organization, determined how such problems are typically dealt with; determined potential roles for communication professionals, the acceptability of positions.

COURSE STRATEGY: Outside individual studies will be used as the basis for seminar discussions and probes. Participants are expected to attend all meetings and be prepared to discuss their findings, reflections and feelings concerning assigned topics. Brief papers will be due on a bi-weekly basis which, when combined, will yield a systematic analysis of organizations in a particular field. A final term paper will focus on a futuristic projection of organizations in a specific field and the role(s) of communications in their future development and operations.

EVALUATION and GRADING: The following factors will be used in evaluation and grading:

1) Bi-weekly Papers (7)	35%
2) Final Paper	45
3) Attendance	10
4) Participation	10
Total	*100%*

TEXT and MATERIALS: Readings will be suggested in various texts and publications. In addition, extensive library research is required.

EXHIBIT I: SEMINAR PROSPECTUS

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION SEMINAR

Topical Areas for Mini-Papers Series

TOPICAL AREAS

1. a) Select the type of organization you wish to study
   b) Determine how such organizations are structured (organized) and managed
2. a) Determine the environmental supports and constraints for such organizations
   b) Determine how such organizations are typically "started-up"--transformed from idea to reality
   c) Determine the typical life cycle for such an organization
3. a) Determine the functions and processes such organizations use to produce their "product(s)"
   b) Determine the other functions and processes of such organizations
   c) Determine the character of human interactions (communications) in such organizations
4. a) Determine the major problems of such organization-with special emphasis on those involving human communications
   b) Determine the role of communication in the emergencce of such problems and in alleviating such problems
   c) Determine potential areas of problems for such organizations in the future
5. a) Determine how and under what circumstances managers decide to actively deal with problems involving communication
   b) Determine the modes selected for dealing with such problems and why they are selected
   c) Determine the criteria used to determine the usefulness of or satisfaction with such modes
   d) Determine the nature of and extent of resources committed to such efforts
6. a) Determine the professional communication roles in such organizations or used by them
   b) Determine the array of roles for communication professionals which would be appropriate for such organizations
   competencies) for roles for Org. Commun. professionals in such organizations
7. a) Determine the acceptability of such positions (6c) in such organizations
   b) Determine an appropriate strategy for obtaining or developing such positions in such organizations.

EXHIBIT 2: TOPICAL AREAS FOR PAPERS

Typically, many of the questions in the prepared list (Exhibit 2) are suggested by participants in open discussion of how they might approach satisfying the requirement of the seminar. However, also typically, participants want to know what the instructor "has in mind."

The final paper is an extension of much data gathered for the seven bi-weekly papers supported by additional study and personal projections of the participant based upon his or her understanding and vision of how the future may develop or unfold.

Weekly group meetings involve review of individual activities, or collective problems on the study, special presentations by participants or the instructor in response to stated group needs and content, process and resource suggestions by the participants and the instructor.

The instructor is available at all other times as a private consultant to each participant.

SEMINAR EVALUATION

The learning objectives outlined are intended to be personlized for each participant. The nature of outcomes are expected to be both individual and subjective. Consequently, seminar (and participant evaluation in part) is focused on:

1. Participant activation--evidenced by group session attendance consultant or other consultants; problem identification, enunciation and solution activity; preparation for group meetings.

2. Quality of written outputs-evidenced by thoroughness of conceptualization; organization; use of theoretical structures in analysis and classification of behavior and problems; clarity and conciseness;development of recommendations or conclusions consistent with data collected.

3. Process--evidenced by precision in defining focus of the study;clarity in defining problems; project planning and (where necessary) revision.

4. Course and Instructor-student evaluation using selected items from a standard instrument of the Department.

5. Seminar Outcomes—an instrument (exhibit 3) eliciting participant rating of the seminar in terms of learning objectives.

Data from the last evaluation measure (Seminar Outcomes) is of specific interest in this discussion. The 19 items of the instrument were theorized to be relevant to the learning objectives as follows:

Learning Objective	All Assigned Items	Exclusive Items
1. In-depth investigation of an organization of choice	1,2,3,4,5,6,14	2,6,14
2. Integration of theory and empirical insights	1,3,4,5,7,15,16	15,16
3. Sensitization of the organization to organizational communicationprofessionals		
4. Preparation of student to market his/her experties her expertise	10,11,12,13,18	13
5. Devlopment of student's confidence in investigative, intellectual and decision making skills as a professional.	17,18,19	17,1.

There is a significant overlap in the assignment of items to various objectives. However, each objective has one or more item which is exclusive to it and which is theorized to be a good indicator for student assessment of seminar outcomes related to the learning objectives.

SEMINAR OUTCOMES

Participant activation-in a first offering of the seminar was high. Over 90% attendance with high participation by all participants was noted. Individual students specified and engaged in a wide variety of learning activities. On a weekly basis, there was an 86% personal interaction between the instructor and individual participants (based upon a single contact criterion.) Consultation with other faculty and outside sources was also reported. Problem identification and solution activity was judged very high. Seminar Participants demonstrated prior preparation for group discussions through activity reports, questions related to assigned topics for group meetings, and submission of written reports.

Quality of written outputs—papers were judged to be well conceptualized, organized, and demonstrated use of relevant theoretical structures. Clarity and conciseness varied, but development of recommendations and conclusions consistent with data gathered or developed was considered appropriate.

Process—Some participants encountered problems in defining the breadth or specificity of their studies. Once such difficulties were overcome, the clarity with which problems were defined was considered adequate.

Course and instructor evaluation—the instrument used was focused upon several basic factors and is used to evaluate both undergraduate and graduate courses. Not all items in the instrument are germane to this discussion. Some which are, and the ratings given by seminar participants follow: All participants indicated that they spent in excess of eight hours per week preparing for the seminar. Comparing the seminar with "other courses I have experienced in my field" sixty percent rated it "above average" and forty percent rated it "outstanding." Rating items concerning the extent of their motivation and intellectual effort, and the extent to which they felt free to "ask questions, express ideas, comment and disagree," the average ratings on a five point scale were 4.6 and 4.8 respectively (5 was highest possible rating.)

Seminar outcomes evaluation—indices of the extent to which seminar objectives are satisfied relate to (a) independent objectives and (b) combined objectives. Two indices for each individual objective (IO) are used: (1) based upon all evaluation items theoretically assigned to the objective, and (2) based upon only those items assigned exclusively to each objective. Formula for these indices yield values ranging from 0 to 100. Values under 50 are considered to reflect marginal outcomes. The composite index is based upon individual objective scoring of those

SEMINAR IN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION
241-720-01

Your assistance in evaluating the seminar using this instrument will be appreciated. Focusing on the organization(s) you studied, please rate the degree to which activities in the seminar (Fall Semester, 1977)...

A. EXPANDED YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF:	Extremely	Very Much	Significantly	Moderately	Somewhat	Very little	Not at All	Check if not Considered in Your Study
1. Organization structure(s) and management practice								
2. Environmental supports and constraints for such organizations								
3. How such organizations are formed and their "life cycles"								
4. Functions and processes used in "producing" whatever "product" is produced								
5. The nature and/or character of human interaction (communication) in the functioning of such orgs.								
6. The major operational problems of such organizations								
7. The role of communication in the emergence of operating problems								

8. The circumstances under which managers perceive that communication problems exist and decide to deal with them									
9. Modes usually selected by managers to deal with perceived communication problems									
10. The professional communication roles (or positions) in or used by such organizations									
11. Appropriate role(s) for professionals in organizational communication in such orgs.									
12. The acceptability of the roles you consider appropriate for professionals in Org. Commun.									
13. The approaches or strategies useful in obtaining or developing such positions in such orgs.									
14. The future problems or conditions which may be faced in such organizations									
B. AIDED IN YOUR:									
15. Development of new insights into and/or the relationships of various organizational and communication theories to the org. studied									
16. Personal understanding of and integration of concepts related to orgs. and commun. in general									
17. Development of a personal concept of yourself as a professional in human communication									
C. IMPROVED YOUR ABILITY TO:									
18. Seek meaningful professional employment in such an organization									
19. Systematically analyze an organization									

Exhibit 3: Seminar Outcomes Instrument

items unique to each objective. The formula yields an index ranging from 0 to 100, and a value of less than 50 is considered a marginal outcome.

Indices computed from participants' responses (N—5) for each of the learning objectives (first offering of the seminar) are shown in Table 1.

Indices for each of the independent learning objectives and for the combined objectives substantially exceeded the level set for declaring a "marginal outcome." All but four of 19 items in the rating instrument (Exhibit 3) received only midpoint ("moderately") or higher rating by all respodents. None of those four items (5, 6, 14, and 18) received more than one rating below the midpoint, and none received a rating below "very little."

The mean scores of respondents on items requiring personal contacts within organizations were lower in most cases than those of other items. This may reflect difficulties encountered in some cases in arranging entry into targeted organizations. No item, however, had a mean below 4.4 (on a scale of 7- see exhibit 3.)

Items receiving very strong rstings by respondents (X 5.5) were 1, 3, 6, 7, 11, 16, 17, and 19. These items span each of the learning objectives, indicating service to each of those objectives. Several of those items relate to depth understanding of important aspects of organizational life-structure; management; organizational life cycles; major operational problems; and the role of communication in such major problems. Other items emphasize personal professional development and skills- systematic analysis of organizations; personal concept as a communication professional; identifying appropriate roles for organizational communication professionals.

On the important item "Improved your ability to seek meaningful professional employment in such an organization" the rating were dispersed:

	Highest						Lowest
Scale Value	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Number Rating	1	2	0	1	0	1	0

This may be attributable to the diversity of professional interests of the participants: two enroled in a doctoral program in organizational communication, one each enrolled in a doctoral speech science program, a communication arts curriculum (doctoral candidate) who is a drama teacher, and an undeclared major area in communication arts (subsequently declared spcialty in organizational communication.)

Strong generalization on the value and potential usefulness of the described seminar are not appropriate at this time. Too many situation specific variables and too few students have been involved in it to date.

	Independent Objectives Indices						
	Index--All Items			Index--Excl. Items			
Learning Objective	Total Items	Sum of Means	Index	Total Items	Sum of Means	Index	Combined Index
1	7	37.6	76.70	3	16.2	77.1	
2	7	38.8	79.15	2	11.0	78.54	
3	6	32.3	76.87	2	10.4	74.25	
4	5	27.7	73.42	1	5.2	74.28	
5	3	16.4	78.06	2	11.4	81.39	
						$\frac{385.56}{500}$ =	77.1

Table 1: Indices Computed from Participant Ratings

Several conclusion or suggestion are possible:

1. The level of involvement of each particpant in the course limits the size group with whic a reasonable "consultant" interaction may be be maintained (contained other professional demads.)

2. The scope of the seminar is such that, depending upon the specificity of the organization(s) investigated, a detailed investigation of all quetsions (exhibit 2) may not be possible within a semester.

3. Arranging fruitful interaction with some orgainzations of interst to students may be quite difficult within a limited time schedule.

4. The instructor must be capable of relating to a variety of types of organizations with some experientially based insights in order to aid students as a consultant.

5. Flexibility in approaching the study questions (exhibit 2) is necessary to accomodate varying organizations and varying field study situations encountered by paarticipants.

6. Group discussions can be richly rewarding in terms of sharing mistakes, problems, solutions, victories, insights, etc. The group should be allowed to teach itself.

7. The instructor must be able to delegate much control to the group and guard against unnecessarily recapturing it. It is difficult at times to keep one's hands off the process and act the consultant rather than the professor role.

8. The xperience is most useful for those with the greatest familiarity with research in areas related to the questions (exhibit 2). Students with limited backgrounds should be guided through an appropriate core of theory and research in conjunction with seminar activities.

9. The instructor must be prepared to recommend a wide variety of instructional materials and references sources related to the questions (exhibit 2.)

While initial implemenation of the seminar was successful, there is obvious room based upon the indices reported. Proof of the seminar usefulness may be best guaged by the ability of the participants to find or create the meaningful positions they desire, their productivity in those positions, and their contributions to research and theory in the future particularly as it relates the organizational problems of those and like organizations.

CLARIFYING THE CONSULTANT-CLIENT ROLE RELATIONSHIP THROUGH AN ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS MODEL

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This paper focuses on the role of the organization communication consultant in diagnosing and improving problem situations. The paper is written on the assumption that both consultant and organization problems could be improved through a sound theoretical diagnosis model. It includes a theoretical model for diagnosing problems which is analogous to Maslow's need hierarcy for individuals. The model is designed to help the consultant orient himself or herself to the client's need level. Specific consultant intervention behaviors are then identified which logically follow the diagnosis, but which are contingent upon the specific needs of the client organization. Finally, the model's measuring potential is discussed along with specific possibilities for programs designed to train consultants on how to apply the model.

DIAGNOSING AN ORGANIZATION'S COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

How often have you been called into an organization as a consultant and heard these words? "We have a communication problem that we would like you to help us with." The first problem confronting the consultant is to get the client to define what he or she means by "a communication problem." In our experiences, we have found it difficult to get a relatively quick grasp of the problems which are felt by the client organization. Also, the client frequently has no orderly method for presenting the problems from his or her vantage point.

After experiencing this high level of ambiguity numerous times, we began to see some pattern emerging in the type of needs which our clients described to us. This pattern approximated the very familiar individual need hierarchy proposed by Maslow (1954). We have developed, by analogy, an organizational need hierarchy which we now use to give us a relatively familiar and easy to apply model for

diagnosing organizational problems. Once the diagnosis is made, the intervention plan follows.

SURVIVAL. In several organizations with which we are familiar the consultant's role was to help the organization keep from terminating its operations. In one case, a new union contract had to be renegotiated with substantial wage reductions in order to preserve the organization and ultimately the employee's jobs. Communication consultants were brought in to help negotiate the settlement.

SECURITY. In a less severe case, 600 people's jobs were threatened due to cost overruns, but the organization's survival was not threatened. We were brought in to help management solve this problem. Our role was to advise and counsel top management. We devised a plan to meet with all 600 employees in small work groups to explain the details of the problem and to enlist their help in saving their own jobs. Management was relunctant at first to share such intimate financial information with the employees, but eventually it resulted in substantial increases in cost efficiency and over a 12 month period, the 600 jobs were saved.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS. We were called in to help solve communication problems at a branch campus of a major state university. It did not take long before we realized that the problems centered around the lack of cooperation and coordination between academic departments within their respective colleges in the university. Our advice was designed to improve and streamline the administrative policies which dealt with the internal relations between and among different academic arms of the university.

Other problems which can arise at this level of the hierarchy deal with relations with groups or individuals external to the organization. This function is usally referred to as public relations and is rich with possibilities for communication consulting.

PROFESSIONAL ESTEEM. Closely related to the relations needs of the organization are the professional esteem needs. Whereas at a university the external relations level may deal with town and gown relations, the professional esteem level deals with improving the status and respect of a unit in the eyes of other professionals. Speech and communication departments historically have not held the same level of esteem as departments of physics, mathematics, or engineering. At this need level, the consultant must focus on helping the client put its "best foot forward" to others in its professional community. Media presentations, newsletters, and special institutes and conferences may be used in this manner.

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS. The first four levels of the hierarchy are deficiency needs, those in which some level of attainment is felt to be lacking. However, at the top level of the hierarchy we encounter what Maslow called the growth needs. "The desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming." Maslow (1954, p. 92)

We spent almost two years working with one client organization which fit at this level of the hierarchy. The top manager said he had a

very successful operation, but he wanted to see how good it could become. As a result of our efforts, significant improvements in employee attitude were documented along with a 7.5 million dollar cost savings due to reduced scrap and reduced absenteeism.

Once the organization's needs have been diagnosed, the consultant's intervention plan becomes appropriate. The next section of the paper deals with the consultant's behaviors. The possibilities for developing a diagnostic tool designed to help consultants measure the specific need level of an organization are most exciting. Such an instrument is critical in generating the data needed to validate the theoretical assumptions discussed in this paper. Also, the specification of the behavioral components associated with organizational needs serves as a basis for the development of training programs to improve consultant effectiveness.

CONSULTANT INTERVENTION BEHAVIORS. Now that we have presented a theoretical model for helping consultants diagnose organizational problems, it seems appropriate to look at some of the specific consultant intervention behaviors which logically follow from such a diagnosis. This discussion takes the model from the theoretical to the practical. If the organizational needs model is going to be of practical use to consultants, then consultants must have a clear understanding of what things he or she must actually do after the diagnosis. By suggesting specific behaviors based upon an analysis of the organization's specific needs, consultants will know what skills and specific interventions are most likely to be appropriate to the client's needs.

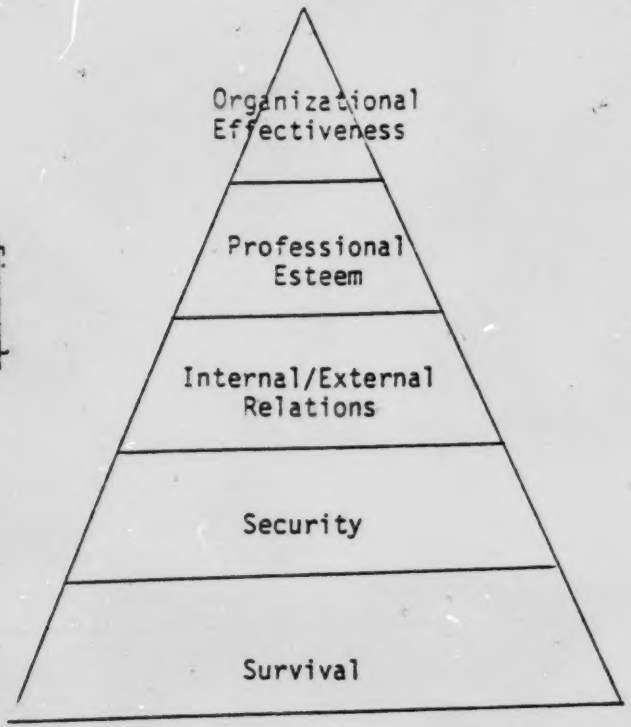
Most organizational development experts agree that the consultant should try to avoid developing prescriptive "doctor-patient" relationships. Such relationships develop an unhealthy dependency and lack of ownership in organizational problems. Rather, the goal of the consultant should be to help the organization learn to develop the resources necessary to deal effectively with their problems. (Schein, 1969, p. 120) We agree that organizations can become too dependent on consultants once that consultant's effectiveness is increased when the consultant gets the organization to take ownership for their problems.

However, it is our belief that before such ownership can be developed, consultants must deal with "where clients are at." Often an organization is at is not where the consultant would like the organization to be. This means that a consultant's behavior will vary depending on the needs of the client organization. In one situation, a consultant may need to be very direct and even prescriptive. However, in another situation a consultant's role may be very indirect, involving behaviors which help the client organization develop its own strategies for change.

Schmidt and Johnston (1970) have developed a continuum of client vs. consultant-centered interaction behaviors. According to these authors, the consultant has a variety of options as to role. The list below shows client system behaviors.

TUBBS AND BAIRD's

ORGANIZATIONAL NEED HIERARCHY



MASLOW'S INDIVIDUAL

NEED HIERARCHY

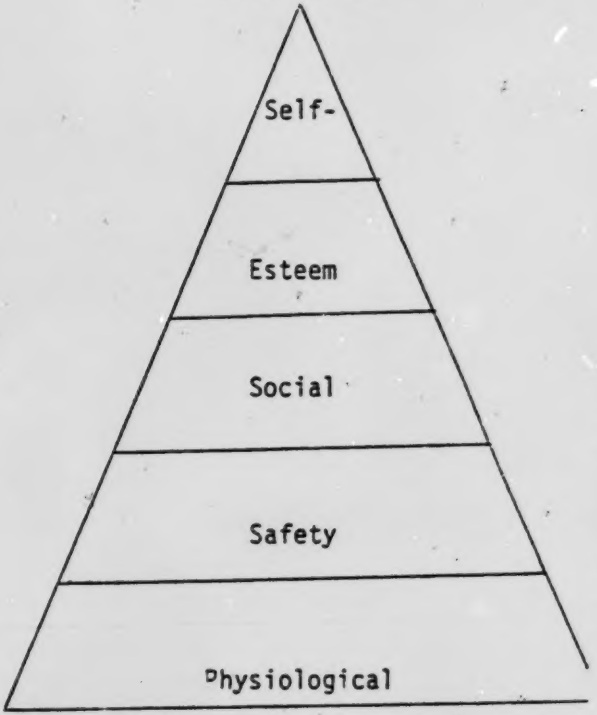


FIGURE 1

1. *Refuses to become involved:* The consultant who feels unquanned to the client may refuse to become involved. Similarly, he may refuse to do so if he feels that the client does not really want to help or if he already has too many other commitments.

2. *Listens and reflects:* At this level, the consultant tries to clarify his understanding of the client's problem. He may use such phrases as: "If I understand correctly, you are saying..." or "Are you saying that..."

3. *Clarifies and interprets:* The consultant may rephrase the client's comments to sharpen them or may interpret what the client intends to say by putting together the ideas underlying a number of comments.

4. *Probes and gathers data:* Now, the consultant begins to take a more active role. He may ask questions about material that the client has not yet brought up, or he may gather new data, e.g., through interviews, observations or questionnaires.

5. *Feeds back data:* At this level, the consultant provides the client system with new data. Such data may have been gathered from the client system itself, and frequently they are "dissonant" with the client system's own data. For example, survey feedback may show that the perceptions of the managers about the work culture and attitudes of the employees are very different from what the managers had expected.

6. *Identifies available options:* Many of the preceeding steps have served to identify or isolate problems or to bring known problems into sharper focus. From his diagnosis of the problems and his interaction with the client system, the consultant may now suggest alternative forms of action ☆ either mildly or forcefully, depending on his rapport with the client.

7. *Proposes criteria:* Occasionally, the client knows what the problem is and the action alternatives available, but is not certain which alternative is the best. In this case, the consultant can help the client to develop evaluative criteria and then to use those criteria in selecting a particular alternative.

8. *Recommends and/or prescribed:* At this level of the Schmidt and Johnson continuum, the consultant may recommend a particular action, based on his expert knowledge and his understanding of the situation. He can describe the options open to the client and give his reasons for making the particular recommendation, bearing in mind that the client must make the final decision, for it is the client who must live with the consequences of that

decision. In extreme cases, the consultant may prescribe a particular action, based on his knowledge and expertise.

9. *Plans implementation:* In the most "consultant-centered" approach, the consultant not only prescribes the solution but also plans the action steps that are necessary to carry out the prescription.

A look at this list suggests that the consultant has a wide range of role options available for interventions. These behaviors range from very direct, prescriptive behaviors (planning implementation, recommor prescribing) to very indirect behaviors (clarifying, interpreting, listening or refusing to become involved at all).

The above conceptual framework has specific application to our notion of an organizational need hierarchy. For example if the consultant diagnoses an organization to be at the "survival" need level, a consultant would likely be called in to "bail out" the organization. The choice of a consultant would be based on the consultant's knowledge and expertise in a certain area. For example, a company whose survival depends upon the development of a more competitive product might hire a consultant to make specific recommendations on product changes and marketing strategies. The role of the consultant in such a situation is a very direct and prescriptive one. The organization's survival depends upon the knowledge, experience and specific recommendations of the consultant. In such a situation it would be inappropriate for the consultant to employ a strategy designed to help the organization "help themselves." Such a role would not be appropriate to the need level of the organization. The organization is telling the consultant that they cannot solve their own problems. The only way to survive is through information and action based on the consultant's expertise and knowledge. The consultant's role in this situation should be direct, perscriptive and contain specific recommendations for implementation.

external relations level may ask a consultant to help with what the organization describes as "communication" problems between employees and among departments. In meeting the needs of the orgznization at this level, the consultant would be best to use a combination of both direct and indirect skills. The consultant would likely begin by gathering information in order to accurately identify the attempt to better understand the organization's problems. Once this has been done, the consultant would conduct meetings in order to "feedback" the information collected. At these meetings the consultant would tempt to explain and clarify the data in hopes that the group would gin to make their own judgements, interpretations and recommendations regarding problem. In this example the consultant would initially use a very direct prescribed intervention (survey feedback). However in feeding back the information, the consultant would play a more neutral role using more indirect behaviors in order to get the group to begin to own the problem.

An organization diagnosed to be at the far end of the organizational need hierarchy (organizational effectiveness) does not need a consultant to prescribe a specific solution. Such an organization is generally characterized by strong top management support, high morale, involvement in decision-making by employees and a demonstrated ability take ownership for their problems. An organization of this nature is only interested in "fine-tuning" an already effective organization. In this situation the consultant would do well to rely on the cleint organization's knowledge and experience and use behaviors (probing, clarifying, interpreting) designed to get the client organization to help themselves. In this situation the organization does not need someone outside the organization telling them what they need to do. Instead, the consultant acts as a process consultant using interventions designed to get the client organization to plan their own strategies and take responsibility and ownership for decisions made.

This discussion has suggested that there are certain consultant behaviors appropriate depending on the organizational need diagnosed. These behaviors can be better seen on a continuum ranging from direct to indirect. Figure 2 shows the organizational need hierarchy with the behavior continuum to the left.

SUMMARY

The above conceptualization suggests that at lower levels of the organizational need hierarchy, organizations need the expertise, knowledge and experience of a consultant. However, as the needs of an organization progress to higher levels, consultants must capitalize on the knowledge and experiences of the organization in developing their strategies. The use of a more indirect approach seems more appropriate in adapting to higher level needs.

The above conceptualization suggests that at lower levels of the organizational need hierachy, organizations need requires very direct, prescribed behaviors from a consultant. However, as the needs of an organization progress to higher levels, consultant. However, as the needs of an organization progress to higher levels, consultant's must capitalize on the knowledge and experiences of the organization in developing their strategies. The use of a more indirect approach seems more appropriate in adapting to higher level needs.

The use of the organizational need hierarchy model will serve as a useful framework for consultants interested in more clearly defining the expectations of their relationships. The possibilities for developing a diagnostic tool designed to help consultants measure the specific need level of an organization are most exciting. Such an instrument is critical in generating the data needed to validate the theoritical assumptions discussed in this paper. Also, the specification of the behavioral components associated with organizational needs serves as a basis for the development of training programs to improve consultant effectiveness.

CONSULTANT BEHAVIOR

Indirect (relies on knowledge and experience of organization)

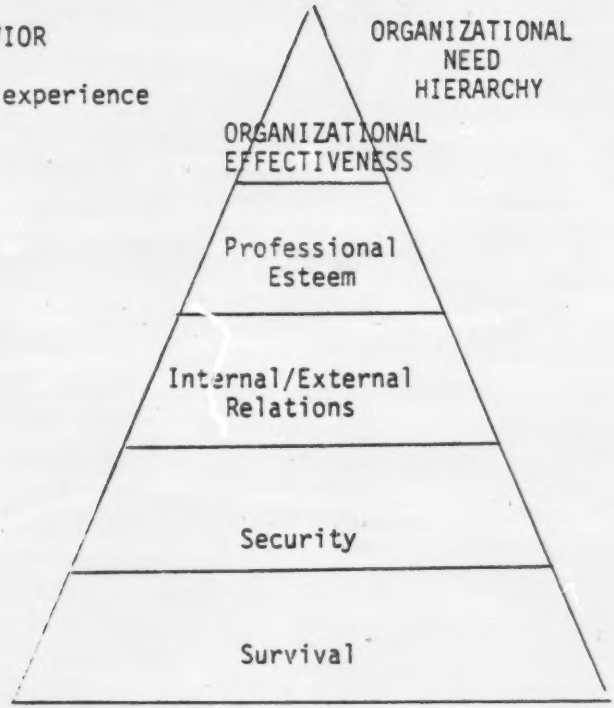


Figure 2.

Direct (relies on knowledge and experience of consultant)

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THE EFFECT OF LEVELS OF PERSONAL INTERACTIONS BETWEEN SUBGROUPS WITHIN AN ORGANIZATION ON PRECEPTIONS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

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It is an article of faith for practitioners in the organizational communication field that good communications at all levels is necessary for an effectively functioning organization. Human Sciences Research, Inc., has had the opportunity recently to study levels of interactions between two important subgroups in a large organization and to relate the findings to perceptions about the way that organization treats those in the subgroups. Specifically, HSR conducted a study for the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences of black and white Army personnel.

It can be hypothesized that extensive interactions between two groups of people such as black and white soldiers will result in a more common set of perceptions about the way the organization treats persons of different races. That is, if communication is good, blacks and whites will be more likely to agree about the way people of different races are treated. The converse would also be true. If black and white soldiers do not communicate, then their perceptions about treatment within the organization are more likely to differ.

A survey of black and white soldiers was conducted by HSR. Questions were asked about the extent of interaction between blacks and whites in the Army. In addition, questions were asked of both groups about treatment of blacks in the Army. By using the answers it was possible to test the hypothesis that low levels of communication are associated with high levels of disagreement between blacks and whites about treatment within the Army. It should be noted that no attempt is being made to state that less communication causes differences in perceptions because the research design does not allow such statements.

The Sample

During June and July, 1976, HSR sent two-person biracial teams of scientists to eight U.S. Army posts in the continental United States. The teams administered a questionnaire to respondents drawn from companies at each post. The sample was developed in two stages. First, a sample of approximately 12 companies per post was randomly selected. Then, a random sample of approximately 40 percent of the personnel in each of the target companies was identified to participate in the survey. The samples were drawn by HSR rather than local Army personnel to minimize the possibility of bias in selection. After the questionnaires were administered and the data edited, a total of 3,733 respondents remained in the sample for the study.

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire covered a broad range of areas regarding black and white relations within the military.[1] Included in the instrument were items relevant to the present study. Items about communication between the races included, for blacks the question:

"How often do white personnel in your company (or work unit) do each of the following things?

1. Spend time with just whites during off-duty hours.
2. Stick together while on the job."

The questions were repeated for white respondents using blacks as the protagonists of the items. In addition, a series of questions was asked regarding treatment of people of different races in the Army.

Results

Results obtained from asking about interactions between blacks and whites are shown in Tables 1 through 8.

As can be seen from Table 1, more than half the black and white respondents report that whites often or very often spend time with just whites while off duty. This self-segregation also appears to extend to the on-the-job situation, as Table 2 shows. While there is more self-segregation off-duty, almost 40 percent of the respondents say that whites often or very often stick together while on the job. These data suggest that there may be very limited communication from the standpoint of the white personnel.

Tables 3 and 4 present similar data about blacks. More than half of the respondents reported that non-whites often or very often spend time with just non-whites during off-duty hours. In addition, more than 40 percent of the respondents of both races indicate that non-whites often or very often stick together while on the job.

1 Robert L. Hiett and Peter G. Nordlie, *An Analysis of the Unit Race Relations Training Program in the U.S. Army* (McLean, Va.: Human Sciences Research, Inc., 1976).

Table 1

Reports of White Interaction Behavior Off-Duty

Question: How often do white personnel in your company spend time with just whites during off-duty hours?

	Blacks		Whites		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Very often	324	35.1	681	24.9	1,005	27.5
Often	234	25.4	1,025	37.5	1,259	34.5
Sometimes	227	24.6	769	28.1	996	27.3
Seldom	93	10.1	178	6.5		
Never	44	4.8	79	2.9	123	3.4
	922	100.0	2,732	99.9	3,654	100.1

Missing Cases = 79

Table 2

Reports of White Interaction Behavior On-the-Job

Question: How often do white personnel in your company stick together while on-the-job?

	Blacks		Whites		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Very often	196	21.1	341	12.5	537	14.7
Often	244	26.3	615	22.6	859	23.5
Sometimes	252	27.2	827	30.3	1,079	29.5
Seldom	124	13.4	509	18.7	633	17.3
Never	112	12.1	435	16.0	547	15.0
	928	100.1	2,727	100.1	3,655	100.0

Missing Cases = 78

Table 3

Reports of Non-White Interaction Behavior Off-Duty

Question: How often do non-white personnel in your company spend time with just non-whites during off-duty hours?

	Blacks		Whites		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Very often	217	23.6	660	24.3	877	24.1
Often	241	26.3	797	29.3	1,038	28.6
Sometimes	259	28.2	727	26.8	986	27.1
Seldom	115	12.5	351	12.9	466	12.8
Never	86	9.4	181	6.7	267	7.3
	918	100.0	2,716	100.0	3,634	99.9

Missing Cases = 99

Table 4

Reports of Non-White Interaction Beahvior On-the-Job

Question: How often do non-white personnel in your company stick together while on the job?

	Blacks		Whites		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Very often	164	17.7	523	19.1	687	18.8
Often	219	23.7	738	27.0	957	26.2
Sometimes	294	31.8	810	30.0	1,114	30.5
Seldom	139	15.0	379	13.9	518	14.2
Never	108	11.7	274	10.0	382	10.4
	924	99.9	2,734	100.0	3,658	100.1

Missing Cases = 75

Table 5

Perceptions of Equality of Treatment: General

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your opinion?

	Blacks		Whites	
	N	%	N	%
In general, non-whites are treated better than whites in the Army.	73	8.0	1,221	45.1
In general, non-whites are treated exactly the same as whites in the Army	233	25.6	1,290	47.7
In general, non-whites are treated worse than whites in the Army	603	66.3	194	7.2
	909	99.9	2,705	100.0

Missing Cases = 119

$X^2 = 1,420$ df = 2

Table 6

Perceptions of Equality of Treatment: Rule Breaking

Statement: Non-whites get away with breaking rules that whites are punished for.

	Blacks		Whites	
	N	%	N	%
Strongly Agree	26	3.3	539	23.0
Agree	27	3.5	584	24.9
Neither Agree nor Disagree	84	10.8	415	17.7
Disagree	255	32.7	481	20.5
Strongly Disagree	389	49.8	328	14.0
	783	100.1	2,347	100.1

Missing Cases = 605

$X^2 = 645$ df = 4

Table 7

Perception of Equality of Treatment: Assignment of Work Details

Statement: Non-whites get more than their share of dirty (work) details.

	Blacks		Whites	
	N	%	N	%
Strongly Agree	157	20.3	40	1.7
Agree	219	28.3	117	5.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	176	22.8	348	15.0
Disagree	147	19.0	1,069	46.0
Strongly Disagree	74	9.6	749	32.2
	773	100.0	2,323	99.9

Missing Cases = 637

$X^2 = 845$ df = 4

Table 8

Perception of Equality of Treatment: Training Opportunities

Statement: Whites have a better chance than non-whites to get the best training opportunities.

	Blacks		Whites	
	N	%	N	%
Strongly Agree	144	18.3	30	1.3
Agree	260	33.1	119	5.1
Neither Agree nor Disagree	188	23.9	405	17.2
Disagree	148	18.8	1,223	52.0
Strongly Disagree	46	5.9	574	24.4
	786	100.0	2,351	100.0

Missing Cases = 596

$X^2 = 956$ df = 4

Table 9

Communication About TV Program "Roots"

Question: Did you discuss the television series "Roots" with any of the personnel in your unit?

	Blacks		Whites		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
With minority personnel only	48	11.8	12	1.5	60	5.0
With white personnel only	14	3.4	66	8.3	80	6.6
White both whites and non-whites	290	71.1	563	70.6	853	70.8
I did not discuss the series with anyone in my unit	56	13.7	156	19.6	212	17.6
	408	100.0	797	100.0	1,205	100.0

These four tables indicate a strong pattern in which whites spend time on and off duty just with whites and non-whites spend time just with non-whites. Where the amount of interaction is so limited, one might conclude that communication levels between the races would be low. As noted earlier, in such a situation it would be hypothesized that blacks and whites would have vastly different perceptions about their organizational environment. The data, in fact, support this hypothesis.

Tables 5 through 8 present the responses of blacks and whites to questions about treatment of blacks in the Army.

It is clear that there are major differences in the perceptions of black and white personnel about equality of treatment. On each of the items the chi-square values are extremely large. The data appear to support the hypothesis that low levels of communiccation are associated with disparate perceptions

The question arises as to whether factors can be introduced which can change levels of communication. If not, then the organizational communication specialist has a hopeless task. In a survey of a similar sample taken immediately after the airing of the ABC-TV special "Roots," data were collected which indicated that levels of communication could be affected.

A sample of 408 blacks and 797 whites who watched at least four episodes of "Roots" was asked, "Did you discuss the television series 'Roots' with any of the personnel in your unit?" Table 9 shows the results. More than 70 percent of both blacks and whites said they discussed the series with both whites and non-whites. This is strong evidence that conditions can be created which would enhance levels of communication between subgroups

Implications

These data have important implications for the organizational communications practitioner. It is apparent that there are differences in the perceptions of the environment by blacks and whites in the Army. These perceptions can adversely affect the funtioning of the organization. In fact, if tensions build to the point of violence, people can be injured and property destroyed.

The Army's situation is somewhat unique, but the data persented can be illustrative of other organizations. The organizational communication specialist can help resolve problems of this sort. Steps which can be taken include:

1. Identify important subgroups. These may be supervisors-employers; older-younger employees; and skilled-unskilled. This paper examined differences by race, but obviously there are many possible subgroupings.

2. Determine whether the lines of communication between subgroups are open or closed. This can be done by observation, interviews or surveys.

3. Identify impact of poor communication, if it exists. Poor communication can affect such things as employee attitudes and perceptions, productivity, absenteeism, etc.

4. Develop countermeasure activities. People are often surprised to learn that their perceptions differ from others in the organization. Training can have a dramatic impact. It is possible to encourage communication by planning of office layouts, holding meetings, or publishing articles on problem-related topics.

5. Evaluation of the effect of countermeasure activities.

It is obvious that, in order to carry out such tasks as these, the communications practitioner needs many kinds of skills. He needs to be able to understand communication processes and to identify the channels of communications. He needs to be able to locate communication isolates as well as groups that are not communicating. The specialist must be able to design programs to counter the negative effects of poor communication and to get communication started again. Finally, he must be able to evaluate scientifically the effects of his programs.

Summary

These data suggest that low levels of interaction between subgroups is associated in the Army with difference in perceptions about the organizational environment. In the Army situation, one factor was identified which served to increase communications. The organizational communication specialist must be prepared to identify situations in which there is poor communication and to develop programs to counteract the dysfunctional effects which may occur.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION: A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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The accepted status of organizational communication as as applied field of study raises the question: What roles, outside of academia, exist for professionals in organizational communication? Knowledge of the communication needs of individuals, whose work behavior is constrained by the rules, norms and values of large organizations, provides a data base from which a list of roles for organizational communication professionals can be generated.

A study was conducted in the Philadelphia area to determine the communication needs and activities of a variety of local organizations. Data was collected on the types of communication problems currently facing organizations, the nature of the communication programs and services utilized by organizations, and the types of organizational positions available to professionals trained in communication.

The study was conceived and carried out in three phases: Sample identification, data collection, and data analysis. Sample identification involved compiling a list of interviewees meeting the following criteria:

1. Employment in a high labor intensive organization.
2. Willingness to be interviewed as a representative of the organization.
3. Accessibility to information regarding planned comunication activities within the organization. Representatives were selected from ten organizations. Seven were Directors of Training or Organizational Development in companies with over 500 employees. Others included a Funding Resource Consultant, a Management Consltant with a manufacturing company, the Vice-President and the Director of Personnel of a bank.

The organizations contacted ranged in size from a staff of two to an international staff of approximately 25,000 persons. The diversified functions of these organizationss inculded provideing funding resources to issue oriented and third world groups, providing mental health care and services, manufacturing and distributing foods and other products and banking.

The data collection phase involved in-depth interviews based on a structured interview guide consisting of both open-ended and close-ended questions. The guide was designed to obtain information in each of the following areas:

1) The nature of the organization and the respondent's role in his/her organization. Sample questions: What is your position in the organization? What are some of the specific things you do in this capacity? Are there any tasks you perform that you consider as communication tasks?

2) The nature of communication training within the organization. Sample quetstions: Does your organization offer training to employees in interpersonal communication skills? What is the nature of this training? Who conducts it? Who participates? Who pays for it?

3) The nature of communication problems within the organization.Sample questions: Are there situations in your organization that might be considered communication problems? How are these situations handled?

4) The organization's needs in the area of communication services. Sample questions: Are there areas of communication within your organization that could be improved? Is there a need for public speaking training in your organization? Is there a need for more effectively run meetings?

5) The nature of positions available to professionals in communication. Sample questions: What positions exist in your organization for people trained in communication? What kinds of people external to the organization are called on to solve communication problems?

The third phase of the study was a data analysis via content analysis.Results of data analysis were organized to reflect the catagorical breakdown of information according to the actual data collected.

One may conclude from the interview data that there is indeed a need for organizational commuication specialists. Interviewees identified the following needs and problems:

1. *To improve public speaking skills.* Representatives of responses in this area were the respondent who stated, "we recognize the importance of presentation skills, there is a need for improvement in our organization". Public speaking skills are used in situations both internal and external to the organization. Managers who must orally deliver annual program and budget reports need training. Executives, sales personnel and public relations personnel who represent the organization in a variety of external contexts were discussed as able to benefit from public speaking instruction.

2. *To improve employees interpersonal skills.* Interpersonal communication skills were recognized as a neccessary component to several organizational tasks. A bank representative stated, for example "training for tellers in interpersonal interface with the public is currently priority".Human resource groups who deal with employee problems were said to need listening and interviewing skills. One

interviewee described his own job as involving interpersonal communication problems such as conflict between a boss and a subordinate.

3. *To increase the effectiveness of group communication.* Concern was expressed for the needs to improve meetings, to establish managerial support groups and for work group team building. One respondent expressed, "we have the standard complaint, too many meetings, Few people are good at running meetings. Few know how to plan an agenda or when to go for a decision".

4. *To improve problem solving, decision making and negotiation skills within the organization.* One typical interviewee clearly stated, "we need models of decision making". Problem solving and decision making skills are discussed as important and often lacking during company mergers, contract renewals and program planning meetings.

5. *To improve communication channels and feedback systems.* Respondents were very interested in discovering the blocks to effective information flow in their organization. Most recognized that problems existed somewhere in the organization but have no means of identifiying and correcting the problem. Written channels of communication were most frequently criticized as ineffective. For example, one interviewee stated, "the current feedback system is not the most effective. Memos are overused, paperwork is out of control, there is too much".

6. *To improve both the quantity and quality of information disseminated throughout the organization.* A major complaint was that much of information sent from executives down to the organization is either redundant, irrelevant or excessive. There is a need to establish functional filtering and sorting procedures for information flowing throughout the organizations.

7. *To systematically examine all the different means of communication within the organization and their relationships to one another.* Representatives of the larger organisations expressed a need for improved coordination of the existing range of communication channels and activities in their organization. Such coordination would necessarily be preceded by a systematic identification of the communicants and their inter-relationships within the organization. One respondent, for example, was particularly concerned with the relationship between communication and organizational decentralization. He said 'we have a need for a systematic way of looking at all the different means of communication within a multi-company decentralized organization'.

8. *To better interpret computerized information for human understanding and utilization.* One respondent stated, 'we have a real problem making computerized information meaningful to managers. There is lot valuable information that is unused because managers don't know what it means'. Another put it bluntly when he stated, 'People are afraid of computers'. There is a strong need expressed for or persons to facilitate the translation of computerized information into

information readilyunderstood by persons whose job performance may be dependent upon such information.

9. *To develop strategies for and measurement of organizational change.* The need for change centered around specific issues such as affirmative action and management style. Respondents expressed a strong desire to expand their own knowledge of how to change the attitudes and values collectively held by members of their organization. A need to measure attitudes and attitudinal change was presented as important to persons responsible for organizational development.

10. *To provide opportunities for employees to explore their intrapersonal communication in relation to their work.* Respondents expressed a need for their organisations to provide programs to help individuals resolve career expectation conflicts. Inconsistencies between an individual's expectations and the company's expectations create problems and need to be resolved. One interviewee stated, 'people's expectations and self-fulfilling prophecies block dialogue'. The need exists for employees to participate in programs such as assertiveness training, career development, and human resource development.

The interview data clearly shows that organizations have communication needs. A variety of roles exist in which communication professionals might work to alleviate and prevent communication problems in organizations. Results of this study lead to two conclusions.

First, there are positions currently existing (both internal and external to organizations) for professionals in human communication as trainers, consultants, researchers, and negotiators. Persons involved in organizational training conduct workshops on topics such as: leadership, motivation, communication, public speaking, decision-making and managment style. Most large organizations maintain an internal training staff, however, outside specialists are often called in to conduct training seminars in specialized areas such as communication skills and public speacking.

Organizational Development Consultants are involved in a wide range of activities emphasising human interaction. A typical consultant respondent described his own job as "the development and implememtation of programs to meet individual and organization needs in the area of communication". Like trainers, consultant roles exist both internal and external to the organization.

Respondents discussed research in their organizations as collecting data necessary for job performance. There are few internal persons charged with the sole responsibility of data collection. Most research is carried out by an individual in need of specific information, Some organizations have departments of research and development that do conduct behavioral research. For the most part, however, outside researchers are contracted to conduct organizational studies.

There are currently positions available for persons skilled in negotiation and decision-making. Organizations employ staff members

with negotiation skills to handle labor relations problems, contract negotiations, mergers and other situations involving the need for individuals representing different views to come to agreement.

Second, there is a need for the establishment of additional roles for communication professionals as interpersonal communication specialists, organizational communication researchers and communication system analysts.

The wide range of jobs in large organizations that are dependent upon interpersonal skills and the problems that arise from lack of interpersonal skills provides justification for the establishment of a role of interpersonal communication specialists. The asset of a communication her ability to look beyond problems as an individual's responsibility (the role taken by industrial psycologists) and to understand the relationship between individuals and their impact upon organizational performance.

Rigorous theoretically based research is seldom conducted in the organizations studied. The expressed needs for a systematic way of knowing about communication throughout the organization and for better means of measuring attitudes leads to the conclusion that there ought to be roles established for professionals trained in organizational communication research. Interpersonal behavior research, attitude surveys and communication network analysis can provide valuable information to organizational leaders and planners.

The role of communication system analyst might be closely related to that of organizational communication researcher. A system analyst would need research skills in order to identify the communication system.The need for improved information flow and communication system feedback, however, provides reason for the establishment of a communication system analyst who would identify, monitor and change the communication system when necessary.

The value of professionals trained in communication was recognized by the organizations studied. There are organization communication needs which call for communication professionals to move into existing organizational roles. There are other organizational needs which might best be handled by the creation of new roles designed around the specialized skills of communication professionals.